

# IOWA BIRD LIFE



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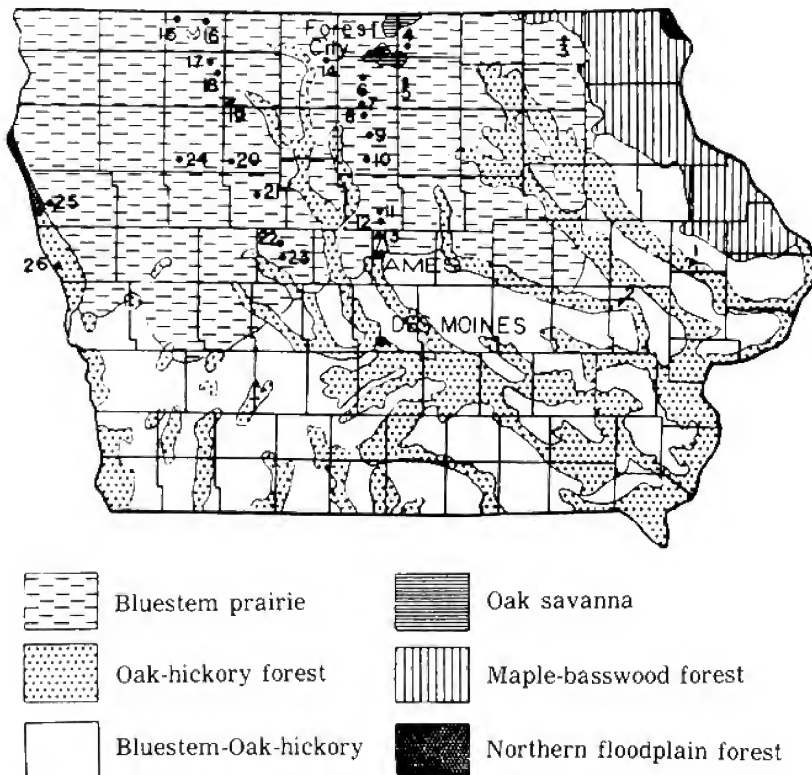
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## Distribution of the Yellow-headed Blackbird in Iowa

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The precise geographic distribution of breeding birds rarely can be recorded because of their secretive behavior and habitat selection. One conspicuous exception is the Yellow-headed Blackbird (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*), which is brilliantly colored, conspicuous in territorial behavior, and restricted in habitat to deep, semipermanent marshes. This species is of economic importance because of its depredations on corn and is of ecological significance because it is a good "indicator" species, demonstrating marsh conditions attractive to a wide variety of game and other birds.

Figure 1



This summary is an attempt to present observations made mostly during 1960-61 when marsh conditions were ideal for this species. I was assisted in field work at that time by C. E. Spatcher and R. J. Siglin. More recent notes and notes of others also have been incorporated to quantitate the geographic distribution of the species (Figure 1). Table 1 presents details of locations, dates (where available), and observers. Additions and corrections will be welcomed. Obviously, Figure 1 also demonstrates the distribution of the marsh habitats along the moraines of the Wisconsin glacial lobe.

Table 1. Some observations of breeding colonies of Yellow-headed Blackbirds in Iowa.

NO.	LOCATION		DATE	OBSERVERS
1	Muskrat Slough	4 mi. W. of Olin	25 June 1961	P. Petersen, Jr.
2	Swan Lake	12 mi. N. E. of Iowa City	14 July 1960	F. W. Kent
3	Cardinal Marsh	3 mi. S. W. of Cresto	14 July 1960	F. W. Kent
4	Elk Creek	Near Lake Mills	June 1962	M. W. Weller
5	Ventura Marsh	Near Clear Lake	1960	M. W. Weller
6	Eagle Lake	Near Garner	1960	M. W. Weller
7	East and West Twin Lakes	W. of Goodell	18 July 1961	M. W. Weller
8	Twin Sisters Lake	W. of Belmond	1960	M. W. Weller
9	Elm Lake	5 mi. N. E. of Clarion	18 July 1961	M. W. Weller
10	Wall Lake	N. of Blairsburg	1960	M. W. Weller
11	Goose Lake	1 mi. N. E. of Jewell	1960	M. W. Weller
12	Little Wall Lake	1 mi. S. of Jewell	1962	M. W. Weller
13	Pothole	4 mi. W. of Story City	1960	M. W. Weller
14	Union Slough	Titonka, Iowa	1960	M. W. Weller
15	Silver Lake	Near Lake Park	1961	M. J. Ulmer
16	Spirit Lake	Spirit Lake, Iowa	1961	M. J. Ulmer
17	Dan Green Slough	7 mi. N. W. of Ruthven	1961	M. W. Weller
18	Trumbull Lake	5 mi. N. W. of Ruthven	1961	M. W. Weller
18	Round Lake	4 mi. N. W. of Ruthven	1961	M. W. Weller
19	Rush Lake	6 mi. S. of Ayrshire	1961	M. W. Weller
20	Sunken Grove Area	3 mi. W. of Fonda	24 July 1961	M. W. Weller
21	South Twin Lake	6 mi. N. of Rockwell	30 June 1961	M. W. Weller
22	Goose Lake	5 mi. W. of Jefferson	14 July 1961	M. W. Weller
23	Pothole	3 mi. N. W. of Jefferson	14 July 1961	M. W. Weller
24	Storm Lake	Storm Lake, Iowa	1961	M. W. Weller
25	Brown's Lake	S. of Sioux City	1961	M. W. Weller
26	Blue, Decatur, and Bend Lakes	W. of Onawa	July 1962	W. Welker

As pointed out elsewhere (Weller and Spatcher, 1965: Iowa Agric. and Home Econ. Exp. Sta. Special Report No. 43), semi-open marshes vegetated with robust marsh plants like cattail (*Typha* spp.) are preferred. In addition, Yellow-headed Blackbirds utilize marshes in open country. In some situations, they nest in small willows (*Salix* spp.), but rarely do they use small marshes completely enclosed by trees.

Geographic distribution often is deceptive in that it may not reflect optimal versus suboptimal habitat. That is, a few individuals may wander quite some distance from the main breeding range and successfully nest. This is less true of the Yellow-headed Blackbird than of other species because it is highly social, and small colonies do not seem very successful or permanent. However, areas 1, 2, and 3 in Figure 1 reflect these small and relatively unsuccessful populations.

Figure 1 does not indicate the variation in relative size of breeding colonies with varying habitat conditions. Precise data for two lakes were presented by Weller and Spatcher (1965), and my general observations during 1958-1968 support that pattern. During years when marshes are dry and open (1967-68) or wet but densely vegetated (1958-59), populations of the Yellow-headed Blackbird are low. As the vegetation is flooded and opens due to muskrat cutting or flooding, Yellow-headed Blackbirds move in along the edges of these openings, and populations increase many-fold.

## CHRISTMAS COUNT



### The 1968 Christmas Bird Census In Iowa

compiled by  
JOHN FAABORG  
705 W. Madison  
JEFFERSON, IOWA

As the three Apollo astronauts were having an easy time going to the moon, 209 Iowa birders were struggling against the forces of nature to complete twenty-four Christmas Censuses. These figures compare with 253 observers and twenty-eight counts last year and are a good indication of the weather conditions. Several of the regular stations were unable to report, and numerous observers were restricted by weather. Sioux City reported "the count was hampered by many inaccessible roads to areas we normally cover." At Waterloo "inclement weather, freezing rain and blizzards, . . . extremely ice covered roads (and) deep snows" forced cancellation of the count. At Wallingford, C.F. Wolden was snowed in on count day, although he did see seventeen species at his feeder. As usual, Davenport led the state with 75 species, two below its record of last year. Following Davenport came Clinton (62), Aledo (59), Burlington (55), and Cedar Rapids (54). Despite the weather, the Iowa total of 104 was only three below last year.

One of the most notable features of this year's census was the reappearance of many of the 'winter finches.' Purple Finches were seen at seventeen stations, in contrast to only three stations last year. A minor invasion of Common Redpolls occurred, with 90 seen at eight stations. Evening Grosbeaks (not seen in 1967) appeared at six stations, Pine Siskins at seven, and Red Crossbills at one. Two of the open-country finches also showed increases. The Lapland Longspur was seen at twelve stations (four last year) and the Snow Bunting was seen at four (one last year). Among the other changes noted were five stations reporting Eastern

Bluebird and two reporting Hermit Thrush. Neither species was seen in 1967. Red-breasted Nuthatches were seen at twelve stations, contrast to only one for last year. The weather conditions may have affected some species. Winter and Carolina Wrens both exhibited decreases from last year. Ducks were somewhat fewer in terms of both individuals and species. The Belted Kingfisher was seen at six stations, ten fewer than last year. The Red-shouldered Hawk, a bird that has been experiencing one of the most distressing declines of recent years, reached an all-time low of only two birds, one at each of two stations. Bald Eagles were also down noticeably, possibly due to the colder weather. Of note among the other species seen were Bohemian Waxwing at Cedar Falls, Red-shafted Flicker at Council Bluffs, White-winged Scoter and Red-breasted Merganser at Davenport, Double-crested Cormorant at Clinton, and Ruby-crowned Kinglet at Des Moines.

1. AKRON (Roads, fields, groves near Bryant farm). Dec. 24; 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Temp. 0 to 10 F.; wind 10 m.p.h. from E. 15 to 18 inches snow on ground. Overcast. One observer: Eldon J. Bryant.

Other species seen during census period: Red-tailed Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, Marsh Hawk, Mourning Dove, Downy Woodpecker, and Harris Sparrow.

2. ALEDO, ILLINOIS (15 mile diameter circle, center 2 miles south of Joy, Illinois, including Lock and Dam 17 and Lake Odessa). Dec. 29; 6:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Temp. 17-32 F.; wind 5-8 m.p.h. from W. Partly cloudy, 1 inch snow on ground, river 10 percent ice covered. Observers (11) in 3 parties; John Faaborg, Elton Fawks, Mr. and Mrs. Jake Frink, Dick Greer (compiler), Ted Greer, Peter Petersen, Jr., Norman Ward, Jr., Johnny White, Mr. and Mrs. Warren Wickstrom.

Details of unusual observations: Hermit Thrush carefully observed in good light (JF,NW).

3. AMES (15 mile diameter circle centered 1 mile east of US No. 30-Interstate 35 interchange.) Dec. 22; 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; wind 5 m.p.h. from NW. Cloudy; snow; ground snow and ice covered. Observers (7) in 2 parties; Dr. David Alftine, Ben Bereskin, Norm Hamilton, Steven Hanselman, Mr. and Mrs. Wilmer Miller, Myron Swensen (compiler).

4. BOXHOLM (7½ mile radius circle centered on Boxholm; mostly open farmland). Dec. 24; 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Temp. 0-5 F.; wind 15 m.p.h. from NW. Cloudy; ground 100 percent snow covered; drainage ditch only open water. Observers (2) in 1 party; Bill and Bob Jackson.

Details of unusual observations: Blue-winged Teal was in drainage ditch and has been present all winter.

5. BURLINGTON (15 mile diameter circle ½ mile north of junction of highways 34 and 61). Dec. 29; 7:15 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; Temp. 22-27 F; wind 5 m.p.h. from NW. Overcast; about 1 inch snow cover; Mississippi 95 percent frozen. Observers (13) in 4 parties; Myrtle Bjork, Patrick Clarahan, Dr. Charles Fuller, Mr. and Mrs. Lowell Fuller, Harold Linder, John Lowther, Peter Lowther (compiler), Jack McLane, Harrison Moore, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Niemann, David Steingreaber.

Details of unusual observations: Savannah Sparrow seen in hedge row at 15 to 20 feet with 7x50 binoculars. All field marks checked: forked tail, streaked breast, and head marks (JMCL). Hermit Thrush was observed at not more than 30 feet with 10x50 binoculars for a few minutes. Eye-ring seen, and rufus coloration of rump and tail (PL). Other species seen during census period: Pileated Woodpecker.

6. CEDAR FALLS (All points within a 15 mile diameter circle, center at Cedar Falls; Black Hawk Park, Falls Access, Beaver Creek, Snag Creek, Wyth Park, Goose Lake, Washington Park, College Gardens, Cedar Heights, and other Cedar

River areas.) Dec. 21; 7:45 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.; Temp. 17-28 F; wind 2-10 m.p.h. from NW. Cloudy, ground 2 inch snow covered, ponds frozen, streams half frozen. Observers (9) in 3 parties; Mrs. Lloyd Collins, Mrs. John Ehlers, Larry Fobian, Russell Hays, Paul Heuer, Leon Lindley, Jeff Llewellyn, Nick Osness, Mrs. K. A. Velie.

7. CEDAR RAPIDS (15 mile diameter circle-Cedar Rapids Federal Building as center). Dec. 29; 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Temp. 4-23 F; no wind. Cold; 4 inches of snow. Observers (18) in 5 parties; LeRoy Bata, Mr. and Mrs. James W. Clifton, Dr. Karl E. Goellner, Mrs. Gus Groth, Mr. and Mrs. Beryl W. Layton, John Layton, Mrs. Lucile Liljedahl (compiler), Mrs. Forrest Millikin, Mr. Jerry Nelson, Miss Lillian Serbousek, Dr. and Mrs. Robert Vane, Robert Stewart Vane, Miss Myra Willis, Mr. and Mrs. Aldrich Zobac.

Details of unusual observations: Three Chipping Sparrows seen at Cedar Lake area North of Waterworks area at distance of 12 feet. (JC). Other species seen during census period: Screech Owl, Myrtle Warbler.

8. CLINTON (15 mile diameter circle, center Elk River Junction, same as previous years). Dec. 28; 5:50 a.m. to 5:20 p.m.; Temp. 23-31 F; wind 10-25 m.p.h. from NW. Overcast, snow and snow flurries in a.m. 2 inches snow on ground, river 80 percent ice covered. Observers (9) in 3 parties; John Faaborg, Mark Henderson, Fred and Maurice Lesher, Mary Lou Petersen, Peter Petersen, Jr. (compiler), Paul Van Nieuwenhayse, Mr. and Mrs. Warren Wickstrom.

Details of unusual observations: Cormorants seen in flight and perched, well observed (WW). Redpolls in three groups (JF, PCP). Other species seen during census period: Canada Goose.

9. COUNCIL BLUFFS (Lake Manawa to US No. 34; covered as part of Omaha Bird Club Count). Dec. 29; 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Temp. 10-20; wind 5-10 m.p.h. from N. 6 inch snow cover; Lake Manawa frozen; Missouri River partly frozen. Observers (7) in 2 parties; Michael Haddix, Carr Heaney, Glenn H. LeDioyt (compiler), Roger S. Sharpe, Robert O. Sharpe, E. Thomas Stacey, R. W. Walker.

Other species seen during census period: Cooper's Hawk, Eastern Bluebird.

10. DAVENPORT (15 mile diameter circle, center toll house of Memorial Bridge, same as previous years). Dec. 22; 5:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Temp. 20-35 F; wind 5-25 m.p.h. from SE-W. Light rain, clearing, snow flurries, 1 inch snow on ground, river 20 percent ice covered. Observers (38) in 17 parties; Mrs. Fred Adams, Steve Aupperle, Carl Bengston, Lewis Blevins, Harry Carl, Allan Carlson, M. Cheek, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Dau, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Dau, Jim Davis, Dale Dickinson, Leo Doering, Elton Fawks, Mr. and Mrs. Jake Frink, T. Hicks, H. James Hodges, Sr. and Jr., Mike, Pat, and W. M. Lonacker, Katherine Love, Don Mc Iver, Mary Lou Petersen, Peter Petersen, Jr. (compiler), Mr. and Mrs. Don Price, Ernie Saddler, Kent Steward, Mrs. Lewis Sutton, L. Swenson, Don Swenson, Joe Tracy, Philip Vaughan, Mr. and Mrs. Warren Wickstrom.

Details of unusual observations: White-winged Scotors seen in good light, white wing patch noted (AC, EF). Osprey-carefully observed, seen several days later by another party (WW).

11. DES MOINES (Denman Woods, Laurel Hill Cem., Easter Lake, Flint Access, Dove Woods, Camp Dodge, Sycamore Park, Maffit Reservoir, Greenwood and Ashworth Parks.) Dec. 21; 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.; Temp. 23-30 F; wind 10 m.p.h. from E. Cloudy with intermittent snow flurries, 1 inch old snow, some open water in streams. Observers (21) in 5 parties; Mrs. A. J. Binsfeld, W. A. Boller, Jack Borg, Mrs. Dwight Brooke, Woodward Brown (compiler), Ruth Chapman, John Faaborg, Oliver Graves, Lester Haskell, Mrs. Lester Haskell, Richard

	1. Akron	2. Aldeo Illinois	3. Ames	4. Boxholm	5. Burlington	6. Cedar Falls	7. Cedar Rapids	8. Clinton	9. Council Bluffs	10. Davenport	11. Des Moines	12. Dubuque	13. Iowa City	14. Jefferson	15. Lamoni	16. Marshalltown	17. Muscatine	18. Osgen	19. Oskaloosa	20. Shenandoah	21. Sioux City	22. Union Slough	23. West Chester	24. Winthrop
Double-crested Cormorant								• 2																
Great Blue Heron					8					1														
Canada Goose									40															
Snow Goose																								
Blue Goose		18		2	5407	54		2511	380	95	205	1								26				
Mallard					65			173			5													
Black Duck																								
Gadwall									1															
Pintail			• 1					3																
Blue-winged Teal																								
American Widgeon																								
Redhead										1														
Canvasback										1														
Lesser Scaup Duck					5					1														
Common Goldeneye		22							106	6											50			
White-winged Scoter								• 2																
Common Merganser					34			338			11										1			
Red-breasted Merganser								1																
Sharp-shinned Hawk		1						3																
Cooper's Hawk		1						1		4														
Red-tailed Hawk		15			11	1	13	12	3	24	17	5	19		10	7	16	1	12	1	2		2	2
Red-shouldered Hawk								1																
Rough-legged Hawk		2	1	1	7	3	4	2	7	5	7		2	4		7	2	2	2	1	1	1	3	1
Bald Eagle		10			59			3		27		1					13							
Marsh Hawk		2	1		5	1		6	2	8	1		6			7	11						2	
Osprey										• 1														
Sparrow Hawk		6				1		2	3	12	3				2	2	3	4		3	5	1	4	2
Bob White		219		30	30	30	33	31	42	47	6	1	9		72	3	15		5	37	10	150	11	30
Ring-necked Pheasant		6	7	400	1	32	33	9	11	52	6	16	16	54	16	3	4	12	3	16	10			
Wild Turkey								31																
Coot							12					1												
Killdeer		1						3		4	2													
Common Snipe		4			7			3		4	2													
Herring Gull								8		2	1													
Ring-billed Gull								19	1076															
Mourning Dove					4				805															
Screech Owl		262	1	56	56	13	151	100	57	223	5	1	60	1	131	45	13	2	2	18	1		3	
Horned Owl		9							3				1											
Barred Owl		5			2	2	2	1	1	4	2		1	1	1	3	3	1	1	2	1	1	1	1
Long-eared Owl		3						6	1	9	1		6											
Short-eared Owl				3				2	1	5														
Saw-whet Owl																								
Belted Kingfisher		2				1	2	1		3														
Yellow-shafted Flicker		1	34	2	25	1	6	18	34	11	41	6	6	2	30	7	27	9	5	8	4		2	
Red-shafted Flicker																								
Pileated Woodpecker		1						2		1														
Red-bellied Woodpecker		37	6		28	5	17	12	10	33	26	7	8	7	18	10	32	3	3	11	5		6	1
Red-headed Woodpecker		52	6		20	4	25	8		35	8	1	8	5	9	12	12		5				18	5
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker		4			3					1	2													
Harry Woodpecker		1	10	5		7	4	5	3	28	6	1	1	3	4	5	7	1		1	2	14	2	1
Downy Woodpecker		51	18	1	72	36	38	35	41	100	62	10	12	14	37	26	39	13	16	24	30	17	1	1
Horned Lark		40	37	45	328	113	9	183	43	364	270	6	20	105	258	127	147	78	20	173	12	36	500	
Blue Jay		6			122	25	36	42	9	124	82	12	18	33	81	34	76	4	11	35	23		26	15



# CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS

9

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Crow	7	264	28	30	68	271	108	275	14	297	157	24	3000	47	6	72	43	8	28	4	51	27	6	15
Black-capped Chickadee	4	116	33		87	58	120	63	58	193	96	15	29	27	202	35	38	21	35	26	77	3	45	3
White-throated Sparrow	36	11			60	7	3	32	2	101	24	2	2	2	12	30	11	3	2	3			30	2
Tufted Titmouse	46	17			36	24	15	6	47	40	8	18	13	13	29	18	19	15	11	9	15		8	1
Red-breasted Nuthatch	1	9			7	2	1	1	1	9	9	1	1	1	2	4	1			4	2			
Red-breasted Nuthatch	2	1			4	3	6	5	2	12	4	1	1	1					1	1	6			
Brown Creeper																								
Winter Wren					4					2	2													
Carolina Wren								1		1														
Mockingbird		3			1			1		1					2									
Brown Thrasher								1		1					2	1	5			3				
Robin	114				24		6	12		1	5	1	6											
Hermit Thrush	1				1					1					4		2							
Eastern Bluebird	1				1					1														
Golden-crowned Kinglet	23				3			9		8		1	2						3					
Ruby-crowned Kinglet																								
Bohemian Waxwing																								
Cedar Waxwing	10				26		1	2	27	16	46		1			2			6					
Northern Shrike																								
Loggerhead Shrike	1				1			1											10					
Shrike (sp.)																								
Starling	102	968	141	10	483	311	++	733		961	960	1426	568	153	188	214	862	47	330	189	1500	15	112	25
House Sparrow		2495	297	106	323	763	++	1885	450	4919	865	163	187	400	480	3	2114	112	297	1014	700	14	123	50
Eastern Meadowlark	8				7		5	3	31	28														
Western Meadowlark																								
Meadowlark (sp.)	15																							
Red-winged Blackbird	6				6	3	1	264	43	3916														
Rusty Blackbird																								
Common Grackle	4				10			124	12	210	4	3												
Brown-headed Cowbird																								
Cardinal	2	351	23		266	53	154	128	56	225	251	22	56	19	213	40	122	5	66	97	36		64	1
Evening Grosbeak					9		2			4	13	6												
Purple Finch	66	5			11	21	7	31		29	59	8	4	3	37	5	21			4	2		3	
Common Redpoll	21					4	11	14		1		3			11									
Pine Siskin																								
American Goldfinch	225	67			150	3	50	211	156	88	251	42	13	3	81	30	110	11	3	40	102		13	
Red Crossbill																								
Rufous-sided Towhee	3																							
Savannah Sparrow																								
Vesper Sparrow																								
State-colored Junco	32	939	185	10	737	536	319	512	164	1477	835	39	105	314	834	312	1301	56	80	335	550	21	117	200
Oregon Junco																								
Tree Sparrow	3	1139	36	5	389	274	43	957	47	1999	1021	9	325	187	371	345	993	137	40	466	442	110	138	200
Chipping Sparrow																								
Field Sparrow																								
Harris' Sparrow																								
White-crowned Sparrow	26				2					17	1	1	3											
White-throated Sparrow	16				1					6	8													
Fox Sparrow	2	1								9														
Lincoln's Sparrow																								
Swamp Sparrow																								
Song Sparrow					1					15	92	20	3	12	27	10	3	9	11	2	3			
Lapland Longspur	10	4	5							385	5	18		235						140				
Snow Bunting																								
No. of Species	14	59	30	16	55	38	54	62	41	75	48	33	46	31	32	31	49	27	25	39	36	11	33	23
No. of Observers	1	11	7	2	13	9	18	9	7	38	21	4	10	1	7	10	6	1	2	6	17	2	3	4
No. of Parties	1	3	2	1	4	3	5	3	2	17	5	1	2	1	3	3	3	1	1	4	8	1	1	2

++ No estimate made

Total Iowa list - 194

\* See data under station in body of article.

Mooney, Mrs. Russell Nicholson, Dr. Harold Peasley, Mrs. Harold Peasley, Dale Reynolds, Mrs. Dale Reynolds, Irene Smith, Mary Ellen Warters, Mrs. Lurene Warters, Mrs. P. C. Winstrom, Linda Winstrom.

Details of unusual observations: Ruby-crowned Kinglet well seen by Haskell party, eye-ring noted. Other species seen during census period: Red-shafted Flicker.

12. DUBUQUE (Center of 15 mile diameter circle at Center Grove Cemetery, including Linwood Cemetery, John Deere and river). Dec. 29; 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Temp. 3-16 F; wind 0-4 m.p.h. from N. Clear; 6 inches new snow over 2 inches ice; river open below dam and below city. Observers (4) in 1 party; George Crossley, Howard Highley Jr., Howard R. Highley and Delbert Ludwig.

Details of unusual observations: Flock of Evening Grosbeaks and one at feeder; only sighting of Common Redpolls in several years; Robin at a feeder for two weeks; Lapland Longspurs at City Dump. Other species seen during census period: American Widgeon, Pileated Woodpecker, Brown Creeper, and Cedar Waxwing.

13. IOWA CITY (15 mile circle, center near N. Liberty, including Iowa City, Lake MacBride, Coralville Reservoir, and west). Dec. 21; 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Temp. 22-28 F; wind 5 m.p.h. from SE. Cloudy, light snow most of day; Lake and Reservoir frozen. River open below dam. Observers (10) in 2 parties; Ann & Seddie Cogswell, Tom Cullen, Vic Eichler, Bob Hulbary, Fred Kent (compiler), Tom & Bill Kent, John Meyer, Malcolm Rohrbough.

Other species seen during census period: Bald Eagle, Sparrow Hawk, Oregon Junco and Lapland Longspur.

14. JEFFERSON (7½ mile radius circle centered on Hiway 30 four miles west of Jefferson; includes Goose Lake & Dunbar Slough). Jan. 1; 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; Temp. -11 to 9 F; wind 5 m.p.h. from S. Clear; 8 inches crusted snow on ground; all water areas frozen. One observer: John Faaborg.

Details of unusual observations: Snow Buntings within flocks of Longspurs and Horned Larks.

15. LAMONI (Parts of a 15 mile diameter circle centered 2½ miles east of Lamoni. Includes county road, farm lands, farm lots, cattle feeding station, cemeteries, and Nine Eagles Park) Dec. 29; 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Temp. 15-28 F; wind 0-5 m.p.h. from S. Sky cloudy; one to two inches snow plus solid and heavy ice glaze on ground and roads; all streams and ponds frozen. Observers (7) in 3 parties; Mrs. Dean Ballantyne, Mrs. Paul Elswick, Bill Gillaspey, Jim Gillaspey, J. Donald Gillaspey (compiler), Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Silver.

Details of unusual observations: Several concentrations of doves found near cattle feed lots. Red-headed Woodpeckers found in oak timber; Horned Larks abundant on all roads; crows unusually scarce. The two Red-breasted Nuthatches have appeared daily at a feeder. One Mockingbird found in small cemetery, the other one along roadside five miles away. Robins in cedar windbreak. Other species seen during census period: Marsh Hawk, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Cedar Waxwing.

16. MARSHALLTOWN (15 mile radius of Marshalltown) Dec. 21; 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Temp. 20-27 F; wind 5-10 m.p.h. from NW. Some snow on ground. Observers (10) in 3 parties; Wayne Britten, Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Glasgow, Mr. John O. King (compiler), Ruth Knights, Mrs. Otis Lacey, Lester Lawrence, Mr. and Mrs. Ed Savage, Ruth Zorn.

17. MUSCATINE (15 mile diameter circle, center Lock and Dam 16, same as previous years). Dec. 21; 5:30 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.; Temp. 23-32 F; wind 5-12 m.p.h.

from N-SE. O.C., occasional light snow,  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch snow on ground, river 50 percent ice covered. Observers (6) in 3 parties; Elton Fawks, Mark Henderson, Mike Lonnecker, Mary Lou Petersen, Peter Petersen, Jr. (compiler), Philip Vaughan.

18. OGDEN (15 mile radius of my home; roadsides, fence rows, creek bottoms, pastures, and woods). Dec. 29; 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; Temp. 25-30 F; wind 6 m.p.h. from E. Overcast; occasional light moisture, ground snow covered, creeks frozen. One observer: Jim Keenan.

Other species seen during census period: Marsh Hawk, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Harris Sparrow.

19. OSKALOOSA (15 mile diameter circle centered on the Mahaska County courthouse including Lake Keomah State Park and South Skunk River). Jan. 1; 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.; Temp. 0-10 F; wind 1-5 m.p.h. from W. Mostly clear, pleasant for a cold winter day. Ground covered with 4-6 inches of ice crusted snow. Observers (2) in 1 party; Keith & Irene Layton.

20. SHENANDOAH (15 mile diameter circle, centered at Farragut, including Riverton area; orchards, timber, coniferous woodland, farms and prairie grassland). Dec. 24; 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; Temp. 18-33 F; wind 10-15 m.p.h. from E. Overcast; spotty cover of old snow; streams frozen, rivers partly open; rain falling in afternoon, followed by snow. Observers (6) in 4 parties; Mrs. Robert Border, Mrs. F. M. Braley (compiler), Mr. Don Burrichter, Mrs. Wallace DeLong, Mrs. Donald Walters, Mrs. Emmett Zollars.

Details of unusual observations: Rufous-sided Towhees were of the western race and have been observed during the fall and winter in a native wooded area.

21. SIOUX CITY (15 mile diameter of Sioux City Auditorium). Dec. 21; 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Temp. 12-22 F; wind 9 m.p.h. from NE. Cloudy with snow in afternoon, 5 to 6 in. snow on ground, Missouri River open, most lakes and streams frozen. Observers (17) in 8 parties; Mr. and Mrs. Jarvis Campbell, Mr. and Mrs. Ray Durst, Mrs. Lyle Graham, Mr. and Mrs. Darrell M. Hanna, Mr. and Mrs. Howard Johnson, Mr. and Mrs. A. D. Kirkpatric, Mr. and Mrs. George Marsh, Robert L. Nickolson (compiler), Mr. and Mrs. Garland Roose, Dr. Morgan Webb.

Other species seen during census period: Canada Goose, Cedar Waxwing, Lapland Longspur.

22. UNION SLOUGH NATL. WILDLIFE REFUGE (All points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center 2,077 acre waterfowl refuge  $5\frac{1}{2}$  miles west of Titonka, Iowa; marsh and water 50 percent; upland grasslands and mixed elm, cottonwood, willow, oak thickets 40 percent; cropland 10 percent). Dec. 27; 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Temp. 15-20 F; wind 15 m.p.h. from NW. Sky overcast with light snow in p.m. 14 inches of snow on ground, drifts to 10 foot deep. All refuge pools 100 percent frozen. Observers (2) in 1 party; R. Dean Oviatt and Robert H. Stratton, Jr. (compiler).

Other species seen during census period: Black Duck, Bald Eagle, Yellow-shafted Flicker, Hairy Woodpecker, Blue Jay.

23. WEST CHESTER (5 mile radius - country roads, "government-land" farm, Crooked Creek bottoms). Dec. 29; 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; Temp. 12-26 F; no wind. Bright sun, 6-inch snow cover. Observers (3) in 1 party; Miss Kathy Fisher (compiler), Mrs. Richard Fisher, Ron Fisher.

Other species seen during census period: Meadowlark (sp), Chipping Sparrow, Harris' Sparrow.

24. WINTHROP (Roadsides and woodlands in Buchanan County, with Winthrop as a starting point). Dec. 25; 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; Temp. 0-10 F; wind 2-5 m.p.h. from SE. Cloudy all day; snow beginning at 4:15 p.m. 5 inches of ice en-

crusted snow on the ground. Observers (4) in 2 parties; Mr. and Mrs. Fred J. Pierce, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Pierce.

Other species seen during census period: Screech Owl, Short-eared Owl.

## BANDING REPORT



### Iowa Bird Banding Summary For 1968

DEAN M. ROOSA  
GOLDFIELD, IOWA

Another fruitful year for Iowa banders has come and gone. We were saddened by the passing of a long time bander and pioneer in Iowa banding, Dr. Martin L. Grant. He helped many get a start in banding. We also extend our sympathy to Gladys Black, whose mother passed away in July. We congratulate Ken Formanek on his appointment as Public Relations officer for the Iowa Conservation Commission and we welcome Robert H. Stratton, Jr., new manager of Union Slough Wildlife Refuge at Titonka. Some banders were less active than in previous years, but this was balanced by the increased activity of several other banders. Pete Petersen again led all individual banders with over 5000 birds. The Diggs were second high with over 2300. New birds to appear on the Iowa list were a Townsends Solitaire, banded by Mrs. Walters and a Northern Shrike, banded by Diggs. Pete netted a hybrid Red X Yellow-shated Flicker. A good number (738) of swallows, especially Bank Swallows, were banded; these birds should yield good results for years to come, if banding is continued at the same colonies. Pete again did a fine job with warblers, Diggs again captured a Pigeon Hawk, Faaborg banded a Western Sandpiper, Pete again banded Say's Phoebe and Ayres banded one Purple Finch! These are a few of the interesting banding events of 1969. Many projects could be given real direction and meaning if worked on cooperatively by Iowa banders.

Following is a list of Iowa banders and the number of species and individuals banded in Iowa in 1968:

Judge and Mrs. Charles Ayres, Ottumwa . . . . .	46	200
Gladys Black, Pleasantville . . . . .	17	71
Dr. Myrle Burk, Waterloo, inactive this year . . . . .		
Conservation Commission, Des Moines . . . . .	19	7,704
Mrs. W. C. DeLong, Shenandoah . . . . .	79	1,240
Mr. and Mrs. Fitzhugh Diggs, Hamburg . . . . .	100	2,340
Judge and Mrs. Charles Ayres, Ottumwa . . . . .	46	200
John Faaborg, Jefferson, student at ISU . . . . .	98	1,387
Ken Formanek, Des Moines, inactive this year . . . . .		
Mr. and Mrs. Keith D. Layton, Oskaloosa . . . . .	82	1,237
Peter C. Petersen, Jr., Davenport . . . . .	126	5,017
Mr. and Mrs. Homer Rinehart, Marshalltown . . . . .	83	1,087
Dean M Roosa, Goldfield . . . . .	4	20

# BIRD BANDING SUMMARY

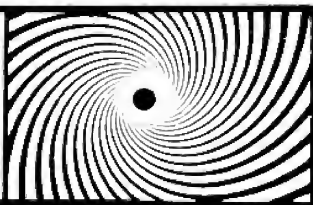
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Robert H. Stratton, Jr., Union Slough, Titonka . . . . .	3	599
Mrs. Donald Walter, Essex . . . . .	36	179
Totals . . . . .	174	21,081

Green Heron . . . . .	4	Red-bellied Woodpecker . . . . .	23
Canada Goose . . . . .	91	Red-headed Woodpecker . . . . .	49
Mallard . . . . .	1810	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker . . . . .	21
Black Duck . . . . .	3	Hairy Woodpecker . . . . .	28
Gadwall . . . . .	4	Downy Woodpecker . . . . .	112
Pintail . . . . .	6	Eastern Kingbird . . . . .	20
Green-winged Teal . . . . .	29	Crested Flycatcher . . . . .	23
Blue-winged Teal . . . . .	3924	Eastern Phoebe . . . . .	65
American Widgeon . . . . .	2	Say's Phoebe . . . . .	5
Shoveler . . . . .	4	Yellow-bellied Flycatcher . . . . .	137
Wood Duck . . . . .	526	Acadian Flycatcher . . . . .	43
Redhead . . . . .	11	Traill's Flycatcher . . . . .	101
Ring-necked Duck . . . . .	1	Least Flycatcher . . . . .	133
Lesser Scaup Duck . . . . .	1	Eastern Wood Pewee . . . . .	48
Ruddy Duck . . . . .	1	Epidonax Flycatcher . . . . .	10
Sharp-shinned Hawk . . . . .	21	Olive-sided Flycatcher . . . . .	13
Red-tailed Hawk . . . . .	18	Horned Lark . . . . .	12
Swainson's Hawk . . . . .	4	Bank Swallow . . . . .	738
Pigeon Hawk . . . . .	1	Rough-winged Swallow . . . . .	12
Sparrow Hawk . . . . .	5	Barn Swallow . . . . .	66
Bobwhite . . . . .	13	Cliff Swallow . . . . .	137
American Coot . . . . .	14	Purple Martin . . . . .	8
Semipalmated Plover . . . . .	6	Blue Jay . . . . .	277
Killdeer . . . . .	3	Common Crow . . . . .	9
Common Snipe . . . . .	3	Black-capped Chickadee . . . . .	157
Spotted Sandpiper . . . . .	4	Tufted Titmouse . . . . .	50
Solitary Sandpiper . . . . .	4	White-breasted Nuthatch . . . . .	27
Greater Yellowlegs . . . . .	1	Red-breasted Nuthatch . . . . .	35
Lesser Yellowlegs . . . . .	3	Brown Creeper . . . . .	82
Pectoral Sandpiper . . . . .	5	House Wren . . . . .	302
Least Sandpiper . . . . .	5	Winter Wren . . . . .	26
Semipalmated Sandpiper . . . . .	38	Carolina Wren . . . . .	4
Western Sandpiper . . . . .	1	Long-billed Marsh Wren . . . . .	9
Mourning Dove . . . . .	1933	Catbird . . . . .	395
Yellow-billed Cuckoo . . . . .	8	Brown Thrasher . . . . .	165
Black-billed Cuckoo . . . . .	8	Robin . . . . .	529
Screech Owl . . . . .	13	Wood Thrush . . . . .	8
Great Horned Owl . . . . .	12	Hermit Thrush . . . . .	34
Barred Owl . . . . .	2	Swainson's Thrush . . . . .	479
Long-eared Owl . . . . .	1	Gray-cheeked Thrush . . . . .	109
Saw-whet Owl . . . . .	19	Veery . . . . .	43
Whip-poor-will . . . . .	4	Eastern Bluebird . . . . .	174
Common Nighthawk . . . . .	6	Townsend's Solitaire . . . . .	1
Chimney Swift . . . . .	1	Golden-crowned Kinglet . . . . .	274
Ruby-throated Hummingbird . . . . .	5	Ruby-crowned Kinglet . . . . .	666
Belted Kingfisher . . . . .	3	Cedar Waxwing . . . . .	68
Yellow-shafted Flicker . . . . .	88	Northern Shrike . . . . .	1
Hybrid Yellow x Red shafted . . . . .	1	Loggerhead Shrike . . . . .	

Starling . . . . .	34	Yellow-headed Blackbird . . . . .	19
Bell's Vireo . . . . .	5	Red-winged Blackbird . . . . .	222
Yellow-throated Vireo . . . . .	3	Orchard Oriole . . . . .	14
Solitary Vireo . . . . .	30	Baltimore Oriole . . . . .	70
Red-eyed Vireo . . . . .	132	Rusty Blackbird . . . . .	2
Philadelphia Vireo . . . . .	30	Brewer's Blackbird . . . . .	5
Warbling Vireo . . . . .	78	Common Grackle . . . . .	403
Black-and-white Warbler . . . . .	82	Brown-headed Cowbird . . . . .	39
Golden-winged Warbler . . . . .	5	Scarlet Tanager . . . . .	11
Blue-winged Warbler . . . . .	1	Summer Tanager . . . . .	1
Tennessee Warbler . . . . .	151	Cardinal . . . . .	188
Orange-crowned Warbler . . . . .	141	Rose-breasted Grosbeak . . . . .	161
Nashville Warbler . . . . .	128	Blue Grosbeak . . . . .	4
Parula Warbler . . . . .	1	Indigo Bunting . . . . .	84
Yellow Warbler . . . . .	54	Dickcissel . . . . .	7
Magnolia Warbler . . . . .	119	Purple Finch . . . . .	34
Cape May Warbler . . . . .	3	Common Redpoll . . . . .	3
Black-throated Blue Warbler . . . . .	6	Pine Siskin . . . . .	2
Myrtle Warbler . . . . .	149	American Goldfinch . . . . .	459
Black-throated Green Warbler . . . . .	11	Rufous-sided Towhee . . . . .	15
Blackburnian Warbler . . . . .	4	Savannah Sparrow . . . . .	19
Chestnut-sided Warbler . . . . .	48	Grasshopper sparrow . . . . .	9
Bay-breasted Warbler . . . . .	21	LeConte's Sparrow . . . . .	1
Blackpoll Warbler . . . . .	42	Vesper Sparrow . . . . .	8
Pine Warbler . . . . .	2	Lark Sparrow . . . . .	6
Palm Warbler . . . . .	22	Slate-colored Junco . . . . .	969
Ovenbird . . . . .	98	Oregon Junco . . . . .	2
Northern Waterthrush . . . . .	120	tree Sparrow . . . . .	712
Kentucky Warbler . . . . .	2	Chipping Sparrow . . . . .	22
Louisiana Waterthrush . . . . .	2	Field Sparrow . . . . .	23
Connecticut Warbler . . . . .	6	Harris' Sparrow . . . . .	162
Mourning Warbler . . . . .	63	White-crowned Sparrow . . . . .	10
Yellowthroat . . . . .	176	White-throated Sparrow . . . . .	395
Wilson's Warbler . . . . .	121	Fox Sparrow . . . . .	118
Canada Warbler . . . . .	38	Lincoln's Sparrow . . . . .	170
American Redstart . . . . .	128	Swamp Sparrow . . . . .	58
House Sparrow . . . . .	4	Song Sparrow . . . . .	176
Eastern Meadowlark . . . . .	3	Total species . . . . .	177
Western Meadowlark . . . . .	3	Total individuals . . . . .	21,081

## OBITUARIES



### BERNT OLAF WOLDEN, IN MEMORIAM

B. Olaf Wolden, charter member and honorary member of Iowa Ornithologists' Union passed away Dec. 24, 1968, at the age of 82. His parents, Peter and Bertha Wolden, were born in Norway; came to Minnesota in adulthood and moved to

Emmet County, Iowa, in 1879. Their son Bernt Olaf was born Oct. 21, 1886, in rural Wallingford. His while life was spent in Emmet Co. In 1924 he was married to Anna Marie Valen who died in 1934. They had two children: Berniece, now Mrs. James Nelson of Poulsbo Washington; and Gerhard Paul, of Minneapolis. In 1938 he was married to Ida E. Iverson of Grinnell, Biology Instructor, Mason City Junior College, Mason City, Iowa. Mr. Wolden was a member of the Estherville Lutheran Church and a past president of the Lutheran brotherhood. As church historian he wrote the history of the congregation for the 75th anniversary in 1936, adding to it for the 85th and 100th anniversary. He was a charter member of the Emmet County Historical Society.

All of Mr. Wolden's family were interested in nature so he grew up loving the out-of-doors. He was a farmer and then a rural mail carrier for thirty-five years retiring in 1956. He and Mrs. Wolden shared an interest in all forms of nature and had written of their researches in several publications. He contributed a column of "Nature Notes" to the Estherville Daily News for 38 years but modestly used only the name "The Observer". He had an amazing amount of knowledge of a wide variety of topics. In answering questions people asked about flowers or wildlife he did not give quick answers. He first made sure of all facts. Under the heading "Faithful Friend is Gone", Deemer Lee, former publisher of the Estherville Daily News, wrote of Mr. Wolden: "The Observer's notes on the world of nature about us has been a wholesome and welcome antidote for some of the social viruses afflicting our mod society . . . There are those who can write, but have nothing to say; and even more who have something to say but cannot communicate it. Thus, contributors like Mr. Wolden are rare." Both Mr. and Mrs. Wolden were well known at the Lakeside Laboratory on Lake Okoboji. They attended the summer lecture courses for many years and shared their notes and observations with students there. Mr. Wolden was elected the first president of a bird club in Estherville in 1934 and was active in a local garden club.

Our association with the Woldens in our ten years at Estherville was very rewarding. He often came out to Ft. Defiance State Park to wander or to sit and watch the birds that came to our feeders. When we saw something unusual our first thought was to call Mr. Wolden to come and verify our identification and share the find. Such an occasion was our sighting a Painted Bunting lazily eating dandelion seeds just below our dining room window. A phone call started the Woldens on the three miles to our house but they were held up by the Memorial Day parade. The bird was accommodating and stayed around for a half hour so they could see it. Another time it was a Yellow-crowned Night Heron.

In late years Mr. Wolden was not well enough to attend distant I.O.U. meetings but joined the birders at the two meetings held in Estherville. He will be greatly missed by all who read his column, but most by his wife, and by the brother (Fred) at whose window he often sat watching the birds near High Lake. --Margaret Jones

#### PAUL A. C. PETERSEN

It is with deep regret that your editor informs you of the death of his mother, Mrs. Pete Petersen, Sr. on Feb. 2, 1969. She had been ill for some time and was unable to continue bird observations in recent months. She was preceded in death by my father who passed away on June 13, 1968 at age 92. Mother was born in April 14, 1892 at Davenport. She was a member of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union for nearly 20 years and had served as an officer of the Tri-City Bird Club as well as having been a member of the Wilson Ornithological Society and the Illinois Audubon Society. She greatly enjoyed the spring and fall meetings and the opportunity to visit with her many birding friends. ed.

## New Field Check List For The I.O.U.

In May of 1968 at the Ottumwa meeting of the IOU, it was announced at an Executive Council meeting that the supply of IOU Field Check Lists was virtually exhausted and that a new printing should be ordered. It was suggested that some improvements might be in order, whereupon a committee was appointed to draft a revised check list. The committee appointed consisted of Robert F. Vane of Cedar Rapids, chairman, Woodward H. Brown of Des Moines and Frederick W. Kent of Iowa City. After some correspondence, a weekend meeting of the committee was held in Cedar Rapids on August 17 and 18.

With a background of nearly two years work in researching a new annotated list of Iowa birds, Mr. Brown suggested the addition to the Iowa list of seven species, all of which had been reported at least five times since 1948, five observations within 20 years having been the requirement heretofore. This suggestion was accepted, and the seven species added were: Arctic Loon, White-faced Ibis, Whimbrel, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Common Raven, Hooded Warbler and Lazuli Bunting.

Three species were removed from the check list, having not met the above requirement. These were: Ferruginous Hawk, Prairie Chicken and Harlan's Hawk, which the committee additionally considered a controversial species. Also, it was decided to use only one listing of Dowitcher because of the uncertainty of identification in the field of the two Dowitcher species. Two hundred ninety species are now listed on the newly published check list.

Also at the Cedar Rapids meeting, the format of the list was discussed. For examples, 35 or so different check lists from various sections of the U.S.A. and Canada were at hand. It was primarily felt that the Iowa state check list could be improved in legibility, i.e., type type face; and further, that a one-fold card was more desirable than a two-fold card. The suggestion was also made of using a possible legend to denote relative abundance and characteristics of time, i.e., migrant, nesting, etc. This suggestion was turned down as being more applicable to a formal check list and not a field check list. It was agreed, though, to use a designation for those species considered rare by the committee and another designation for those western species reaching or entering Iowa. (The notation of rare for Yellow-bellied Flycatcher is an obvious error, as can be seen by checking the banding summary. ed.)

Close perusal of well printed check lists showed that nine lines to the inch seemed right for best legibility. Family headings in the Iowa list were decreased from 56 to 40, but there still appeared a necessity for about 40 inches of column space. After considerable deliberation, it was decided to change the size of the check list, and a card size of  $3\frac{1}{2} \times 6$  was chosen to fulfill the new requirements of one fold and 40 inches of column space. This size presented many advantages. For those who file their check lists, this card could be filed in an easily obtainable  $4 \times 6$  file. It could be mailed in a standard  $6\frac{3}{4}$  envelope, it could be carried easily in a shirt pocket, and last but not least, it could be read easily because of the larger type size.

As in the past, a short line preceding the species name was thought desirable, as the species ticked off or marked with a cross could be readily added up in a column form. From an educational viewpoint, in order to become familiar with correct species names it was thought best to print the names of all species to conform to the American Ornithologists' Union Check List of North American Birds, 5th edition, 1957, the official authority for both the common and scientific



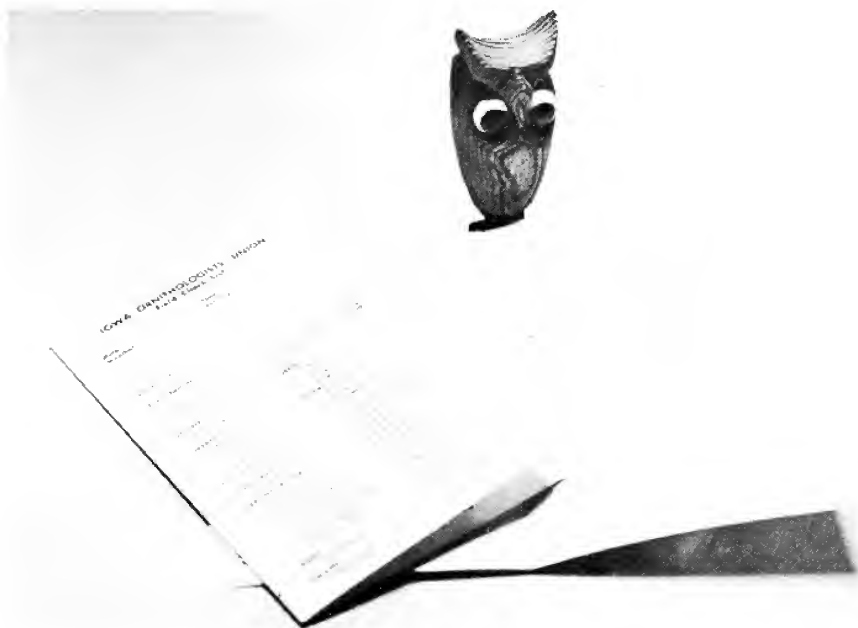


Photo by F. W. Kent

names.

A few last ideas: Every effort was made to print the check list so that a family of birds would start at the head of a column. This very nearly succeeded. Concerning the data at the start of the check list, the printing was kept to a minimum to allow maximum space for writing. The observer must surely know to list under "weather" such items as temperature, wind, ground cover and sky. If he chooses to keep track of distance traveled by foot and car, he certainly may.

In conclusion, the committee knew it was folly to try to please everyone. They submit their effort for its legibility, convenience and ornithological completeness, with a hope that it will be well used.

Robert F. Vane, Chairman, Woodward H. Brown, Frederick W. Kent.

## May Convention To Be Held At West Okoboji

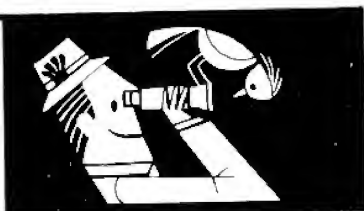
Plans are going forward for the forty-seventh annual Spring convention of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union which will be held May 16, 17 and 18 at Vacation Village on West Okoboji Lake. This convention, with its setting in the Iowa prairie lake area, promises to be a fine one. Members should mark those dates on their calendars now as a "must" to attend. In this lake area, the best shore-birding in Iowa is possible, and many members will remember the excellent birding and the long list of shorebirds compiled at the Estherville convention in 1957. The committee hopes that Stilt Sandpipers, Marbled and Hudsonian Godwits will be on the list of everyone who attends the convention.

Within a radius of 20 miles there are 16 major lakes as well as numerous potholes and sloughs which have always made this area a waterfowl and shorebird habitat unexcelled in the state. Also nearby is the Caylor Prairie, a unique climax

prairie. Vacation Village itself is very close to the University of Iowa Lakeside Laboratory. Because of this excellence as a field trip area, the essay program will not be as long as at some other meetings. This shorter program of papers will also allow ample time for visiting and viewing of exhibits. The meeting will open with early registration and an informal reception on Friday evening. Saturday morning's program will not start until 10 a.m. so that those who wish to go on a field trip may have a few extra hours of birding. Nor will the afternoon program and business meeting be too lengthy. It is hoped that there will be time for further exploring of the territory in late afternoon. The Saturday night banquet will have as its highlight the film "Migration Mysteries" given by Dr. Walter Breckenridge of Minneapolis, former head of the University of Minnesota Museum of Natural History. Sunday morning there will be field trips followed by luncheon and compilation of birds. All meetings, exhibits and meals will be at Vacation Village which is on the west shore of West Okoboji. The complete program together with registration and reservation forms will be sent to all members about the middle of April.

Your officers are hoping to see you all there! Mrs. Robert Vane.

## FIELD REPORTS



The weather this winter has been such that many observers have been in the field very little. The northern sections had more snow than the areas farther south, but the central part at least had a succession of freezing rains and ice storms which made travel, either by car or on foot, very difficult. One compensation has been the number of northern birds which, because of bad weather or scarcity of food, have frequented our feeders.

**Loons, Herons.** A Common Loon at Lock 13 on 16 November was unusual (PCP). A single Great Blue Heron was at Webster City on 22 January (RM), and Jack McLane gave an interesting description of another seen on 29 December flying with outstretched neck. Identification was made positive by following the bird until it perched.

**Geese, ducks.** Although the goose-hunting season was thought poor (DH), there were 325 Canadas at the Red Rock Refuge through December (GB). Two Canadas and a Snow Goose were on the river at Iowa City through January (FK). There were between one and two thousand ducks, principally Mallards, at Lake Macbride in the first week of December, but few divers and a scarcity of scaup (FK). The duck population at Red Rock about the same time amounted to "thousands" (GB), but the oxbows south of Sioux City were frozen over (DH). Credit Island had one or two Black Ducks through 5 December and also on 4 through 22 January (PCP), and there were a number at Riverton in mid-November where Blue and Green-winged Teal were plentiful (EAG). Golden-eyes on the Missouri at Sioux City were estimated at 200 (DH). There were 4 White-winged Scoters seen at Lock 14 on 15 December by Elton Fawks, and a Red-breasted Merganser on the 22nd was also unusual (PCP).

**Hawks.** This group was thought generally down (EB, GB, EAG, KL) but Sharp-shinned were thought in good numbers while fewer than half the usual

number of Red-tailed found on the Davenport Census (PCP). Red-shouldered seen on the Christmas Censuses totaled 2, which is down from the 8 or 9 per year counted in the three previous years. None was seen at Davenport; the first miss in 19 consecutive years. One was seen on 14 December at Montpelier and Fred Leshner saw one near Clinton on 28 December (PCP). Two unusual winter hawks were a Broad-winged on 11 January near Walnut Woods flushed three times and positively identified (DM), and a Swainson's on 6 December near Ames seen by Myron Swensen and Prof. Greij. Rough-legged were seen rather commonly. Bald Eagles were few until the cold in early January with only 27 on the Davenport count, but 50 were present by the end of January (PCP). Single birds were reported: an immature at Gladbrook on 2 November (RH); at Decorah on 7 December (Osgood fide RH); southeast of Des Moines on 11 December (GB); and 15 December and 1 January (FK). They were thought fewer than usual at Sioux City (DH). Marsh Hawks were in good numbers with 9 seen within minutes on the Muscatine Census (PCP).

**Bobwhites, Pheasants.** Reports of Bobwhites vary from very few (KL) to abundant (DG), and with none seen at one location while a covey is feeding daily in another (GB). Pheasants were thought to be doing well (EB, GB, DG, JK), but very few seen (KL) and a very poor hunting season (DH). Bob Barrett of the Conservation Comm. is quoted as reporting a considerable loss due to the weather (DH).

**Killdeer and Snipe.** There are the usual reports of wintering birds with a flock of 30 Snipe at Gladbrook on 2 November (RH).

**Owls.** Screech and Great Horned Owls have become scarce (CFW). Both Long- and Short-eared were seen by Mrs. Hewitt at Readlyn, but there are fewer owls in the area than formerly (RH). A Screech Owl in the red phase was seen at Ames on 16 November (MS). Long-eared are down and missed on the Davenport Census for the first time since 1956 (PCP), but were seen north of Ames (MS). Short-eared were thought up (PCP) and 3 were seen in December (JK). There are a couple of Saw-whets near Ames in the area where they have been since 1963 (MS) and the first in a number of years was seen several times in Des Moines.

**Woodpeckers.** There are a few Yellow-shafted Flickers wintering as far north as Marble Rock (PK), and they are the most numerous woodpecker (JK). A Red-shafted Flicker has been at a Des Moines feeder for several weeks (EMG), and another at Hamburg (EAG). Sapsuckers are reported: late in December and another at Bettendorf since mid-December seen by Robt. Dau (PCP), with several in Des Moines (JK, GRN, MB). A pair of Pileated are coming daily to a feeder at McGregor (LF). A Red-headed on 16 January was only his second winter record (EB) while 7 were banded on Christmas in Cedar Rapids (KL). (See General Notes-ed.) There are a dozen or more wintering in a wooded area near Lamoni (DG).

**Larks, Jays, Crows.** Reports of Horned Larks ranged from "up a bit" (FK) to "about double the usual numbers" (PCP). Blue Jays were thought few (DH) but too many (KL), but both felt the number of Crows was down.

**Chickadees, Nuthatches, Wrens, Creepers.** Chickadees and White-breasted Nuthatches are way down (RH), and the latter also scarce at Pleasantville (GB). Red-breasted Nuthatches appear plentiful throughout the state. Carolina Wrens are becoming reestablished in the Davenport area (PCP), and have been noted elsewhere (EAG, DH, WHB). Brown Creepers are either missing or few (KL, DH).

**Thrushes.** A Brown Thrasher spent most of December in Davenport (PCP), another spent several weeks in December at Ottumwa (OTU), and one is still in

Des Moines at the end of January (DM). There are several reports of single Robins but they have been seen in flocks of from 5 to 15 (DG) with 12 to 20 wintering near Swan Lake (FK). A Varied Thrush was observed several times at Storm Lake by Mrs. E. G. Crocker. A Hermit Thrush was seen at Bettendorf on 7 January by Pat Lonacker (PCP), and a Townsend's Solitaire spent 15 minutes in the Brookes' yard on 13 January.

**Waxwings, Shrikes, Starlings.** No Bohemian Waxwings are reported other than the one at Cedar Falls on the Christmas Count, and only scattered Cedars are mentioned. Northern Shrikes are mentioned twice: one was seen south of Webster City on 12 January (RM), and there are these dates in the Iowa City area, 30 November, 7 and 21 December (FK). Starlings were thought down (DG), but large flocks are to be found in feed lots (KL, DH).

**Icterids.** Reports of meadowlarks are generally favorable: small numbers but seen regularly (DH), more numerous this winter (JK), good numbers (PCP), largest wintering population ever (EB), well scattered with as many as a dozen, usually 1 or 2 (KL), but none at all (GB). Three Brewer's Blackbirds were seen on 19 January (EAG). Wintering Grackles are 2, evidently crippled, (GB), and 2 at Ottumwa (OTU). The only large blackbird roost mentioned is one at Nahant marsh with Red-winged Blackbirds predominating (PCP).

**Finches, Sparrows.** Sparrows fared badly and are rarely seen (EB). Cardinals are spotty and seen in flocks if at all (GB). The increased number of reports of Finches is thought due to their being driven to feeders by bad weather (DH). Evening Grosbeaks have staged a mild invasion with reports of from singles to flocks of 10 or 12 (FK, PCP, RH, CFW, MS, WHB). Purple Finches are reported as more numerous than usual (PCP, RH, FK, DG, DH), but none so far (JK). Redpolls were seen on seven dates (PCP) while Mrs. Hewitt saw 1 on 3 January and a flock of 150 on 19 January (RH). Pine Siskins are mentioned twice (PCPDH) Those mentioning Goldfinches thought them down (JK, DH). A small flock of Red Crossbills was seen in Ames early November (JF), and some were in Waterworks Park in Des Moines on 28 November (MEP). Towhees are reported from three places: Cedar Falls on 26 November by Eleanor Crowin (RH), on several dates in December and January in Des Moines (IS), and 4 or 5 reports at feeders (DH). Juncos are either in smaller flocks or more scattered (KL), and more than usual (JK, DH). A Clay-colored Sparrow was seen on 30 November, 1 and 3 December (OTU). Harris' Sparrows, usually immatures, are being seen: (GB, RB, CFW, PK, DH). Longspurs were thought many (EB) and a few were seen with Horned Larks (FK) while 40 were near Garnaville on 24 December. A Snow Bunting was seen on 1 December at Lock 14 (PCP), another was present for three days early in November (DG), and from 6 to 50 were seen from 31 October through December when the area became inaccessible (FK).

**Contributors:** Mrs. Gladys Black, Pleasantville; Mrs. Margaret Brooke, Des Moines; Eldon Bryant, Akron; John Faaborg, Ames; Mrs. E. A. Getscher, Hamburg; Donald Gillaspey, Lamoni; Mrs. E. M. Griffith, Des Moines; Mrs. Darrell Hanna, Sioux City; Russell Hays, Waterloo, Lynn Johnson, McGregor; Jim Keenan, Ogden; Fred Kent, Iowa City; Jeff Kern, Des Moines; Pearl Knoop, Marble Rock; Keith Layton, Oskaloosa; Dick Mooney, Des Moines; Ron Muilenburg, Webster City; Mary E. Peck, Des Moines; Peter C. Petersen, Jr., Davenport; Irene Smith, Des Moines; Myron Swanson, Ames; Mrs. O. T. Upp, Ottumwa; C. F. Wolden, Wallingford. WOODWARD H. BROWN, 4815 Ingersoll Ave., Des Moines, Iowa 50312.

## GENERAL NOTES



**BIRD VISITORS AT OUR CHRISTMAS PARTY**--On Christmas Eve, Dec. 24, 1968, after closing our store at 4 P.M., we journeyed 100 miles from Oskaloosa to Cedar Rapids, Iowa, to spend the holiday with my brother, Beryl Layton, his wife Patricia, and their 2 children, John and Susan. The grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Kray of Vinton, were there also. All of us are very interested in birds.

By floodlight and flashlight, in the cold and snow, Beryl and I managed to drive an iron pipe through the frost under a blanket of snow, deep enough to permit inserting some poles to support three 40' mist nets used for catching birds for banding purposes. We put 2 nets up in a long narrow V shape, closed entirely at one end, and tied together at the top, starting at the closed end and extending well past the middle of the nets. The open end of the V was quite close to the house, and between the two nets at this point we had a variety of feeders well stocked with everything birds like to eat plus a variety of walk-in traps to catch the birds that did not get into the nets. The third net was installed in an L shape with half of the L being directly between two suet feeders mounted on two trees, the other half of the L was across the line of flight between the tree and the feeding area where the other nets and traps were located. After a very enjoyable evening spent visiting, eating, watching the TV for progress of the moon astronauts, etc., we finally all got to bed, anxious for Santa's visit during the night, and to see what birds would come to our party next morning.

Morning came! Lo and behold, Santa had been there, and believe it or not, none of us heard him! Bright and early the birds started to show up for their Christmas breakfast. In short order we captured and banded a beautiful adult male Purple Finch about 7 A.M., barely light outside. Then very soon we had two more fine males, real pretty in their raspberry juice colored plumage. About 8 A.M. we welcomed another male, and two of unknown sex or age since they were very plain colored, quite similar to a House Sparrow. Around 10 A.M. two more lovely males in full dress called on us. All eight of these interesting birds were examined and greatly admired by all of us. Most of us had never before had the opportunity to see a Purple Finch close up before, and my! how they can bite! All eight left us, proudly wearing a shiny new numbered band around their right tarsus, a Christmas gift from their Uncle Sam. Mixed in with the Purple Finch activities, we suddenly captured that old Red-headed Woodpecker that had decided to winter in Cedar Rapids and eat the Layton's suet. That was wonderful, we all were glad to catch him and see his lustrous red, white and blue (?) colors, some folks swear it is more blue than black. We observed the sharp tail feather, the needle sharp claws, and oh yes, stretch his tongue out again, it must be all of 2" long and barbed at the end for capturing grubs and unsects deep in holes and cracks in tree limbs. Wow! Look at that! Give him a free bracelet and let him go, glad you came--we enjoyed your visit, mister red head.

In no time at all we had banded a couple of Hairy Woodpeckers, a Black-capped Chickadee, and three Downy Woodpeckers, and there was that old red head in the net again. Only it wasn't. It was a new visitor wanting a band too. We gave him an anklet and sent him on his way. Would you believe it, on Christmas Day,

there was another red head, then another, and another, and finally two more, a total of 7 red heads before the day was over! Aand we thought one old red head had got too lazy to move south when winter came. Feed 'em folks, you have now way of knowing, without catching and banding them as we do, how many friends you are helping to get through the bad weather when their natural food is scarce or covered by ice and snow.

To round out a very successful day of banding and studying and admiring our visitors, we also had one Blue Jay, one Tufted Titmouse, two Am. Goldfinches and five Slate-colored Juncos. The total--10 species and 31 individuals. A very Merry Christmas was had by all. --KEITH & IRENE LAYTON, 201 High Ave. W., Oskaloosa.

**HOVERING FLIGHT AND RED-TAILED HAWKS**--Returning to Des Moines from the DeSoto Bend area in western Iowa late in October, we encountered an unusual number of Red-tailed Hawks, apparently in migratory flight. The birds would be noted in twos, fours, or fives, and we encountered about 36 over an area of some 60 miles west to east. They were taking advantage of southerly upslope winds over the rolling western Iowa hills, and occasionally one and another individual hawk would hover. We see hovering performed infrequently enough by Buteos to prompt us at first to jump to the conclusion that these few individual Red-tails were Rough-legged Hawks which, of course, they were not. (A well observed adult Rough-Leg seen the same day reminded us that the basic coloration of the Rough-legged Hawk is blackish, as against the Red-tail's brownish). Immature Red-tails hovering in a head wind do remind one of Rough-legs, and the occurrence of hovering by the Red-tails reminded us that they (as well as their larger relative) do hover at times. And we are further reminded once again that hasty identification on the basis of fewer than full facts is but a short cut to ornithological perdition.--JOSEPH AND DOROTHY BROWN, 3300 Lincoln, Des Moines.

## BOOK REVIEWS



**Galapagos, Island of Birds**--Bryan Nelson--William Morrow and Co., New York--338 p., 59 photographs, 56 line drawings--1968--\$7.95.

Dr. Nelson and his wife were fortunate enough to spend a year doing research on Tower and Hood Islands in the Galapagos. These two uninhabited islands with their large populations of breeding seabirds had never before been studied in depth. Among the birds they carefully observed were the Blue, Red-footed and Blue-faced Boobies, Frigatebirds, Lava and Swallow-tailed Gulls, Waved Albatross and Mockingbirds. They visited the Guano Islands off the Peruvian coast before leaving the area. Most of the author's research was directed toward the Boobies, and a summary chapter discusses the differences and similarities within this group, the family Sulidae. Another chapter is devoted to the Galapagos Sea-lion. Considering the amount of data presented the book is very readable. The many line drawings and photographs do much to enrich the text of a very fine piece of both scientific and semi-popular writing, ed.

**Finding Birds in Mexico**--Ernest P. Edwards--Second Edition, printed by the author at Sweet Briar, Virginia--282 p., many maps and line drawings with four

color plates--1968--\$6.95, \$4.95 paperbound.

Primarily, but not exclusively, a guide to where to find birds in Mexico. The author devides the country into six regions, based on physiographic features. The larger regions are further sub-divided into sub-regions. The regions are treated in general terms, with the bird life, vegetation, topography and highways being covered. The next section deals with 68 localities, giving a general characterization of the area and a list of birds to be expected in each habitat. This section also includes an indication of seasonal changes to be expected. No accommodation information is included, a change from the first edition. The plates of birds depict 212 species with 74 shown in color and are intended to supplement other guides. A list of all species recorded in Mexico is found in the final section. This list includes length and distribution by region and subregion. If the species is not found in the U. S. a brief description is given. A bibliography and index are also included.

Any birder planning to visit Mexico should certainly have a copy of this book. It provides a tremendous amount of information not found elsewhere and is organized in a very useable manner. The paperback edition is probably adequate for the traveler, making it an economical purchase. ed.

**Birds in Legend, Fable and Folklore**--Ernest Ingersoll--Singing Tree Press, Detroit, Michigan--292p.--reprinted 1968--\$11.50.

A very well researched book, originally published in 1923, which covers both the well known and obscure bird tales. The author covers birds as national emblems, symbols, badges, messengers of saints and gods, tools of witches and means of divination. The bibliography is very extensive and the style is interest holding. The price is high, but the printing quality is excellent as is the paper and binding. ed.

**Introduction to Zoology**--T. H. Savary--Philosophical Library, Inc., New York--239 p., 79 line drawings--1968--\$6.00.

A concise introductory volume on the subject, with the approach that includes the omission of histology, embryology, physiology, and genetics. Also reduced to lip-service are symbiosis, parthenogenesis, behavior and parasitism. It is what could be termed the "old school" approach, but it is still written with a modern touch. ed.

**Washington Birds, Their Location and Identification**--Earl J. Larrison and Klaus G. Sonnenberg--Seattle Audubon Society, Seattle, Washington--258 p., 30 plates of black and white drawings, 8 color plates, 7 photos, 4 maps--1968--\$3.95, paperbound.

A fine state bird book. Not on the lavish scale of some of the recent publications, but very well done and packed with information. Certainly within reach of the travelers budget and a book which should be indispensible for the Washington tourist. It includes a description of the faunal and floral zones, habitat associations, average breeding dates, and a checklist of Washington and neighboring areas. The species accounts discuss outstanding habits, ecology, behavior, plumage description and a detailed descriptonal summary. All in all, this is a good regional work, highly recommended to anyone planning to observe birds in this area. ed.

**Life Histories of North American Cardinals, Grosbeaks, Buntings, Towhees, Finches, Sparrows and Allies**--Arthur Cleveland Bent and collaborators, compiled and edited by Oliver Austin, Jr.--reprinted by Dover Publications, New York--1889 p., 141 photos, 3 color plates,--1968--3 volumes, paperbound--\$3.00 per volume.

Dover has now reprinted the entire Bent set. The original Smithsonian edition was reviewed in the September, 1968 issue of *Iowa Bird Life*. The color plates are included in this reprint and the paper quality, especially the covers, is superior to the original, ed.

**Canada Goose Management**--Edited by Ruth L. Hine and Clay Schoenfeld--Dembar Educational Research Services, Inc., Box 1148, Madison, Wisconsin--195 p., many photos, tables and charts--1968--paperbound--\$5.50.

The core of this book is a collection of papers presented at a symposium on the Canada Goose held in Madison in December, 1967. Included is an inventory, by flyways, of continental population problems and prospects; studies in population dynamics and distribution; current issues in management; a case study of the Mississippi Valley population and a summary. Although written primarily for the professional, the amateur will find much of interest in this book. ed.

**Wisconsin Sideroads to Somewhere**--Clay Schoenfeld--Dembar Educational Research Services, Inc., Madison--246 p., 13 photographs--1968--paperbound--\$2.95.

A collection of essays on conservation and natural history in Wisconsin. Very smoothly written and packed with a keen insight into conservation. It is the type of book which can provide reading material for a brief period or an entire evening. Much of the material is quite applicable to Iowa. ed.

## NEW MEMBERS



Members joining up to February 19, 1969. All from Iowa.

Mrs. Nina Corwin, 802 Railroad E. Grand Jct. 50107

Mrs. J. A. Downing, 3333 Grand Ave., Apt. 242, Des Moines 50312

Steven J. Hauselmann, 221 S. Oak Ave., Apt. 28, Ames 50010

Mrs. Clifford Myers, Jr., RR 1, Marion 52302

Louis E. Pailliotet, Riverside 52327

Mrs. Dorothy Phares, Box 351, Collins 50055

Mrs. Dale Reynolds, 2830 Frances Dr., Des Moines 50310

Mark Rouw, 1202 E. Sheridan, Des Moines 50316

Edward Savage, 704 Woodbury, Marshalltown 50158

Miss Irene Smith - reinstated, 1108 - 26th St., Des Moines 50311

Miss Virginia Van Lieu (S), 3660 Grand Ave., Apt. 620, Des Moines 50312

Doyle L. Woods, 604 Ashland, Indianola 50125

## Cover

Members familiar with the *Jack Pine Warbler*, publication of the Michigan Audubon Society, will not have to be told who our cover artist is for 1969. For those unfamiliar with this fine journal we are happy to acknowledge the beautiful work of Dr. Robert S. Butsch of the Exhibits Museum of the University of Michigan and extend to him our thanks for a fine job. ed.